

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ANKARA 09362 231459Z

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

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AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PINS, TU

SUBJ: STUDENT DISTURBANCES

REF: A. ANKARA 9124 (NOTAL), B. ANKARA 9014,

C. ANKARA 8 67, D. ANKARA 8946, E. ANKARA 8904

1. FOLLOWING THE BLOODY EVENTS OF THE FIRST DAYS OF
DECEMBER (REF A) TURKEY'S INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER
EDUCATION HAVE WITNESSED A WELCOME RESPITE FROM WHAT HAD
APPEARED AS UPWARD SPIRAL OF STUDENT VIOLENCE.

2. DURING THIS PERIOD OF NATIONALIST FRONT GOVERNMENT
HAS TAKEN THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS WHICH MAY HAVE CONTRIBUTED
TO THE COOLING-OFF:

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PAGE 02 ANKARA 09362 231459Z

(A) MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AND OF

THE GOVERNMENT COALITION PARTNERS FOLLOWED BY STATEMENTS ON THE SERIOUSNESS OF STUDENT UNREST AND THE POSSIBILITY OF MARTIAL LAW, DECEMBER 4 (REF C),
(B) A "STATE SECURITY BRIEFING" ON DECEMBER 5 (REF B),
(C) A CONFERENCE OF UNIVERSITY RECTORS AND CABINET MINISTERS, DECEMBER 8,
(D) A STATEMENT BY PRIMIN DEMIREL ON DOMESTIC SECURITY, DECEMBER 10 (REF A),
(E) A CONFERENCE OF STATE ACADEMY PRESIDENTS AND CABINET MINISTERS ON DECEMBER 20.

3. THE CONFERENCES ON DECEMBER 8 AND 20 WERE ATTENDED BY ALMOST ALL UNIVERSITY RECTORS AND ACADEMY PRESIDENTS (THE ACADEMIES ARE MOSTLY PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS IN ECONOMICS/ COMMERCE AND ENGINEERING/ARCHITECTURE). THE GOVERNMENT WAS REPRESENTED BY THE PRIMIN, THE THREE DEPUTY PRIMINISTERS, AND THE MINISTERS OF INTERIOR, EDUCATION, JUSTICE, YOUTH AND SPORT, AND CULTURE. COMMUNIQUES AND PARTICIPATNS' STATEMENTS TO THE PRESS SHOWED NEAR UNANIMITY AMONG GOVERNMENT AND EDUCATIONAL LEADERS THAT STUDENT UNREST HAD GROWN BEYOND AN INTERNAL PROBLEM OF THE SCHOOLS TO A NATIONAL CONCERN WHICH REQUIRED GOVERNMENTAL ACTION. WHAT ACTION WAS REQUIRED WAS, HOWEVER, UNDECIDED, ALTHOUGH VARIOUS MEASURES WERE DISCUSSED TO INCREASE CAMPUS SECURITY AND TO IMPROVE THE LIVING CONDITIONS OF STUDENTS.

4. IN THE WEEK PRECEDING THE DECEMBER 12-16 SACRIFICE HOLIDAY, WHICH MANY STUDENTS CELEBRATED AT HOME, ONLY SCATTERED STUDENT UNREST WAS REPORTED: 1) STUDENT CLASHES AT ERGANI, DIYARBAKIR PROVINCE, 2) SHOTS FIRED AT A HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL'S HOME AT BILECIK, URFA PROVINCE, 3) DYNAMITING OF TOB-DER (TURKISH TEACHERS UNION) HEADQUARTERS IN ARGUVAN, MALATYA PROVINCE, AND 4) TEMPORARY OCCUPATION OF LANGUAGE, HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY FACULTY OF ANKARA UNIVERSITY BY RIGHTISTS.

5. ONLY AT ANKARA'S HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY DID VIOLENCE MAR RESUMPTION OF CLASSES AT TURKISH UNIVERSITIES DECEMBER 17.
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PAGE 03 ANKARA 09362 231459Z

THERE SIX STUDENTS WERE REPORTEDLY INJURED IN A SHOOTING AND BEATING INCIDENT. ON DECEMBER 22 AN EVENING POLICE SEARCH OF A STUDENT HOSTEL AT ANKARA UNIVERSITY UNCOVERED ONLY A COUPLE OF WEAPONS.

6. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THE POSSIBILITY OF NEW VIOLENCE IS EVER PRESENT, IT SEEMS THAT A COMBINATION OF WINTER WEATHER, A MAJOR HOLIDAY, AND ASSORTED POLITICAL DECISIONS MAY

HAVE HELPED TO CALM THE STUDENT SITUATION FOR THE TIME
BEING. POLITICAL FACTORS WHICH MAY HAVE PLAYED A ROLE INCLUDE:
(A) ACTIONS BY THE NATIONALIST FRON GOVERNMENT
OUTLINED PARAGRAPH 2,
(B) DECISION OF THE REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY TO
DIRECT ITS MEMBERS NOT RPT NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN
DENONSTRATIONS NOT RPT NOT ORGANIZED BY THAT PARTY
(REF B).
(C) DECISION OF TOB-DER TO CANCEL PLANNED ANTI-
GOVERNMENT DEMONSTRATIONS (REF B), AND
(D) A SEEMING CONSENSUS THAT MARTIAL LAW--THE
ALMOST CERTAIN RESULT OF CONTINUED, ESCALATING VIOLENCE--
WOULD NOT BE IN THE INTEREST OF ANY OF THE PARTIES
INVOLVED: THE STUDENTS, GOT, OPPOSITION, OR MILITARY.
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